Applicant : Catherine Tornabene et al.   Attorney's Docket No.: 06975-114001 / Community 05
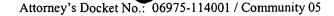Serial No. : 09/810,625
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7.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein receiving the response comprises receiving the response in an on-line chat room.

8.   The computer implemented method of claim 1, wherein automatically updating services comprises providing a list of current members that includes the new member.

16.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically updating services comprises enabling current members of the group to share data files with other current members of the group including the new member.

17.   The computer implemented method of claim 16 wherein the data files are provided by the current members of the group.

22.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 further comprising offering new services based upon the current members of the group including the new member.

23.   The computer implemented method of claim 1 wherein automatically updating services comprises providing information in an instant messaging buddy list that includes information for the new member.

24.   A communication system for sharing information among members of a group comprising:
     a group administrator for processing information about the current members of the group;
     a group communicator cooperating with the group administrator for delivering and exchanging information with current and prospective group members; and
     a group information updater cooperating with the group communicator and group administrator for providing automatically updated services to current members including a new member.

25.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group administrator further comprises:

a group member profile server for updating data related to current members including the new member; and

a database connected to the group member profile server for storing data related to current members including the new member.

26.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator further comprises:

an instant message host in communication with a client system; and

a login server in communication with a client system and the instant message host for determining whether the client is authorized to access the instant message host.

27.   The communication system of claim 26 wherein the instant message host further comprises:

an instant message server for sending and receiving data; and

a domain server cooperating with the instant message server for providing supporting functions of the instant message host.

28.   The communication system of claim 27 wherein the instant message host further comprises a routing gateway connected to the instant message server.

29.   The communication system of claim 24 wherein the group communicator further comprises:

an Online Service Provider host in communication with a client system; and

a login server in communication with the client system and the Online Service Provider host for determining whether the client is authorized to access the Online Service Provider host.

30.   The communication system of claim 26 wherein the Online Service Provider host further comprises an Online Service Provider server for sending and receiving data.

31.   The communications system of claim 24 wherein the group information updater further comprises a user interface for communicating and exchanging data with one or more members of the group including the new member.

32.   The communications system of claim 31 wherein the user interface resides on an Online Service Provider host.

34.   A graphical user interface for inviting a prospective member of a group to join the group, the graphical user interface comprising:

an invitation for the prospective member to join the group;

a name of the group;

a list of one or more current members of the group;

and a tool for the prospective member to respond to the invitation.

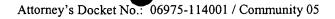35.   A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium, comprising instructions for:

storing information about more than one current member of a group in a database;

receiving instructions from at least one current member to invite at least one prospective member to join the group;

sending an invitation to the prospective member to join the group;

receiving a response from the prospective member;

adding the prospective member to the group as a new member based upon receipt of an affirmative response; and

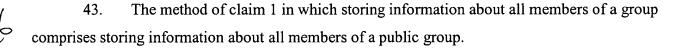automatically updating services to current members to account for the new member.

Please add new claims 40-55.

--40.   The method of claim 1 in which the current members of the group comprise members of a family.

41.   The method of claim 1 in which the prospective member comprises a relative of a current member of the group.

42.   The method of claim 1 in which storing information about all members of a group comprises storing information about all members of a private group.

43.   The method of claim 1 in which storing information about all members of a group comprises storing information about all members of a public group.

44.   The method of claim 1 wherein the invitation comprises a personalized message to the prospective member.

45.   The method of claim 1 further comprising authorizing an invitation to be sent to the prospective member.

46.   The method of claim 45 in which the authorizing is performed by a group founder.

47.   The method of claim 45 in which the authorizing is performed by a group owner.

48.   The method of claim 1 further comprising deleting a current member.

49.   The method of claim 48 in which the deleting is performed by a group founder.

50.   The method of claim 48 in which the deleting is performed by a group owner.

51.   The method of claim 1 further comprising promoting a current member to a group owner.

52.   The method of claim 1 further comprising denoting a group owner to a current member.

53.   The method of claim 1 further comprising promoting a group owner to a founder.

54.   The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a notification of the response to one or more current members.

55.   The method of claim 1 further comprising treating the new member as a current member.--